

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

EA-07 FRB-03 INR-07 IO-13 NEA-10 NSAE-00 USIA-06

OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

SAM-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SS-15 /116 W

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R 101625Z SEP 76

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1825

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 2462

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L EC BRUSSELS 08848

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEC, PO, SP

SUBJECT: SOAMES COMMENTS ON PORTUGAL AND SPAIN

1. DURING CALL ON EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SOAMES ON SEPTEMBER 10, I ASKED FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE OUTLOOK FOR ENLARGEMENT OF THE EC TO INCLUDE PORTUGAL AND SPAIN AS FULL MEMBERS. SOAMES SAID HE ANTICIPATED A FORMAL PORTUGUESE APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP "WITHIN SIX MONTHS." THOUGH FOREIGN MINISTER FERREIRA WILL BE IN BRUSSELS TO SIGN RECENTLY NEGOTIATED TRADE AND OTHER AGREEMENTS AT TIME OF SEPTEMBER 20 EC COUNCIL, SOAMES DOES NOT EXPECT MORE THAN GENERAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT FUTURE RELATIONSHIP. AFTER FERREIRA HAS TOURED ALL NINE CAPITALS (PRESUMABLY LATER THIS FALL, A FORMAL APPLICATION SHOULD FOLLOW SHORTLY.

2. I ASKED HOW THE COMMISSION VIEWED THE PROSPECT OF PORTUGUESEMEMBERSHIP. SOAMES ANSWERED THAT, "IN THE LONG RUN, "MEMBERSHIP IS RIGHT, BOTH FOR PORTUGAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

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EUROPE. BUT IN THE SHORT TERM, GIVEN PORTUGAL'S SERIOUS

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND A DEVELOPMENT LEVEL EVEN LOWER THAN GREECE, THE PROSPECT IS TROUBLING. HE NOTED THAT THE COMMISSION, AS IT DID WITH GREECE, WILL HAVE TO OFFER AN "OPINION" TO THE COUNCIL. WHILE A PREPARATORY PERIOD PROPOSAL ALONG THE LINES IT MADE IN THE GREEK CASE MIGHT MAKE SENSE ECONOMICALLY, THE GREEK PRECEDENT, WHEN THE EC GOVERNMENTS COLLAPSED IN THE FACE OF A VIOLENT GREEK REACTION TO THAT OPINION, WOULD UNDERSTANDABLY BE MUCH IN MIND. IN ANY CASE, SOAMES NOTED, IT WILL BE UP TO THE COMMISSION THAT TAKES OFFICE NEXT JANUARY TO DEAL WITH PORTUGAL (FOR WHICH HE APPEARED RELIEVED).

3. ON SPAIN, SOAMES COMMENTED THAT FULL MEMBERSHIP, EVEN UNDER THE MOST OPTIMISTIC ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION IN SPAIN, WAS AT LEAST FIVE OR SIX YEARS AWAY. IT WOULD BE AT LEAST A YEAR OR TWO BEFORE ALL NINE EC GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE READY TO ENDORSE SPANISH DEMOCRACY, ANOTHER YEAR OR SO FOR THE EC TO PREPARE FOR NEGOTIATIONS (AGAIN AS WAS TRUE IN THE GREEK CASE) PLUS UP TO TWO YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND ANOTHER FOR RATIFICATION. IN THE MEANTIME, IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT SPAIN "REGULARIZE" ITS CURRENT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY, AND IN THESE TALKS SO FAR, HE SAID, SPAIN WAS BEING VERY DIFFICULT. HINTON

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